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SENT TO: ~~XXXX~~ PARIS TOPOL

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/FOR FINLETTER FROM SECRETARY

I am deeply disturbed by restlessness on part of Stikker and NAC members about consultations on Berlin. A first order of business has been to reply to Soviet aide-memoire. Obviously, such a reply ought to be made in harmony with those who share occupation rights with us and with Federal Republic. This required time needed for careful preparation US proposed reply plus quadripartite consultation. It was not surprising that three other governments had a considerable number of suggestions and that these suggestions had to be resolved into a single text. The principal aspect of the draft reply is that it basically restates the essential ~~elements~~ of the Western position on the most important issues raised by the Soviet aide-memoire. It does not purport to offer new proposals since such proposals must be carefully worked out among allied governments, including NATO. Since draft reply generally restates what we have considered to be agreed Western position, we ~~had~~ hope that NAC

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S DRusk:mr 7/9/61

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The Secretary

GER - Mr. Hillenbrand  
S/S - Mr. Mau

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governments ~~can~~ review it promptly. Obviously, new proposals would require more time.

Meanwhile, a far-reaching review has been going on within US government on Germany and Berlin. We cannot begin intergovernmental consultations on courses of action or any proposals until we ourselves are clear about how we see the problem and how we think the West ought to proceed. There has not been intergovernmental consultations on these aspects. Unfortunate press speculations and leaks out of context have apparently been picked up in Europe as evidence that far-reaching decisions have been taken and that intergovernmental consultations have moved into final stages without preliminary consultations with Stikker or NATO members. This is simply not so and repeated indications of this attitude among NATO members in the face of your assurances to contrary amount to wholly unacceptable <sup>suggestions</sup> ~~charges~~ of bad faith. If NATO members are impatient about delay, they should reflect upon fact that Berlin crisis involves the gravest possible issues and that problem requires ~~serious~~ <sup>serious</sup> and intensive study. US must accept its grave responsibilities with utmost <sup>clarity</sup> ~~responsiveness~~ and do everything within its power to ensure that its proposals to its allies and to the Soviet Union ~~may~~ fully reflect those responsibilities. We could quickly and ~~and~~ automatically simply repeat earlier positions but the new Administration has an obligation to review the matter deeply and bring together political, military, economic, propaganda and other factors in a position which

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can offer wise, firm and effective leadership to the free world.

Also relevant is the observation I made in Oslo that consultation is a two-way street and that the initiative is available to all parties. Despite the fact that it is well known that Germany and Berlin are very much on our agenda for fundamental policy and action determination, Canada has been the only NATO country (outside the quadripartite group) to furnish us with ~~specific and thought-out suggestions~~ <sup>specific and thought-out suggestions</sup> about how the crisis can be handled or what the general nature of Western proposals might be. Needless to say, we would welcome such ~~tentative and preliminary views~~ <sup>tentative and preliminary views</sup> at the very time when it is known that we are thinking hard about the US position on future courses of action.

In your private conversations with Stikker and NAC representatives, you should feel free to be frank and direct and need not feel defensive.

If NATO governments feel embarrassed by a reference to them in first paragraph our draft ~~xxx~~ reply, you and British, French and Germany NAC representatives can consult and agree to eliminate that reference or change word QUOTE consult UNQUOTE to the notion that QUOTE we have had the benefit of the views of UNQUOTE or some such language.

You will be receiving separate instructions on French points raised in TOPOL 36.

~~As to the subject of consultation, you are aware that the only way to avoid the possibility of a consultation being held in the future is to consult now. But we must have a very good reason for holding such a consultation.~~

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As to timing NATO consultation, we are most anxious to proceed on schedule first indicated. US is under great pressure foreign and domestic opinion about reply. Considerations first paragraph above plus our assumption NATO Governments have also been thinking hard about Berlin seem to us to make original schedule possible. Am sending personal message to foreign ministers this point in effort speed up their response. If we cannot get rapid reaction to reply which largely sets the record straight, it is discouraging to envisage difficulties allied consultations in weeks ahead on <sup>basic</sup> ~~basic~~ questions about future course of action. Please do your best on this with individual NAC members.

FYI President considers timing publication reply most urgent matter and we would have to consider possibility of proceeding unilaterally if proposed schedule cannot be met. End FYI

Rusk  
(ees)

RUSK

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